

PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE

SUPREME JUDICIAL COURT

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
January, 31, 2008

**SUPREME JUDICIAL COURT JUSTICE JOHN M. GREANEY AND
CHIEF JUSTICE FOR ADMINISTRATION & MANAGEMENT
ROBERT A. MULLIGAN TESTIFY ON JUDICIAL SALARIES
BEFORE COMPENSATION ADVISORY BOARD**

Stressing the urgent need to restore judicial salaries to adequate levels, Supreme Judicial Court Justice John M. Greaney and Chief Justice for Administration & Management Robert A. Mulligan last night testified at a public hearing at the State House before the Compensation Advisory Board. The Advisory Board on Compensation was established by statute to study and make recommendations to the Governor on “the adequacy of compensation of officials,” which include the judges, the Constitutional officers, and the legislative leaders.

Justice Greaney and Chief Justice Mulligan emphasized the importance of salary restoration to maintaining the highest levels of judicial performance. Currently, Massachusetts judicial salaries rank 45th in the country when adjusted for cost-of-living, according to the National Center for State Courts. “Unless the problem of stagnant compensation is satisfactorily addressed, there will be, sooner rather than later, a steady erosion in the quality of justice, with adverse effects on the rights of our citizens,” said Justice Greaney.

“Judges must be strong in character and judgment and intellectually equal to the finest lawyers who practice before them,” said Chief Justice Mulligan. “Judicial excellence is not driven by salaries alone. However, it is critical to create a compensation structure that fairly and equitably confirms the essential nature of the work performed by judges in upholding the rule of law – the bedrock of a stable and democratic society.”

Justice Greaney and Chief Justice Mulligan presented members of the Advisory Board with salary charts and comprehensive research binders objectively documenting the failure of judicial compensation to keep pace with both inflation and rising salaries in other professions and occupations, both private and public.

The two judges explained to the Board that the caseloads are increasing in every court department and that the cases involve a growing number of complex constitutional and legal issues which require careful research and intense deliberation. Massachusetts judges are also on call, on a rotating basis, to handle emergency legal matters at nights and on weekends every day of the year through the Judicial Response System. Judges are severely limited in opportunities to earn additional compensation because of ethical and time restraints.

Also testifying before the Board on behalf of the Judiciary were Attorney Michael B. Keating of Foley Hoag, who is Chair of the Court Management Advisory Board and Attorney Kathy B. Weinman of Dwyer & Collora, who is President-Elect of the Boston Bar Association.

Supreme Judicial Court Chief Justice Margaret H. Marshall, who is President-Elect of the Conference of Chief Justices, was attending the Chief Justices' mid-year meeting and was unable to present to the Board last night.

The Advisory Board on Compensation is co-chaired by Paul Guzzi, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce and Nora Costa, Managing Director of Salary.com. Other Board members are Stephen Crosby, Dean of the McCormack Graduate School of Policy Studies at the University of Massachusetts; Thomas Kochan, Professor of Management at MIT's Sloan School of Management; and Pamela Wilmot, Executive Director of Common Cause.

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